

PLANNING AHEAD

Notes for the Planning Community

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Notes from Jim Johnson

Planning Builds Civil Works Program

One of the key ingredients in building a strong, responsive and highly respected civil works program is a healthy planning program. This includes efforts at Headquarters and field offices that encourage creative approaches to problem solving, and that fully utilize all existing authorities, national programs and initiatives.

I have observed that individual divisions and districts have taken different approaches to building and maintaining civil works programs nationwide. I expect that many of these differences are not so deeply rooted in unique geographic conditions as much as different ways in which these organizations carry out their responsibilities. If we are going to strengthen our civil works program nationwide, we need to work together to ensure that all of our divisions and districts have the necessary resources, tools and information to optimally build and maintain their civil works programs. How do we do that? First let's discuss

what we are doing in Headquarters, and then what field offices are doing and can be doing.

In Planning Division, Headquarters, we have created a field-friendly environment in which each of our branches is focused on proactive support to the field and building a stronger civil works program. Let me provide some examples.

- We are strengthening vertical teamwork by getting involved early in the development of field decision documents. We have been able to approve most decision documents, and set forth clear conditions of approval for some documents that might otherwise have been disapproved. If we are going to take a negative action on a decision document, I have committed to coordinate directly with division planning chiefs in advance of such an action.

- We are revising our planning guidance to reduce the time and cost for field offices to do business. We cancelled the requirements to submit time and schedule changes for HQUSACE approval. We modified reporting requirements for 905(b) reports, including cancellation of the requirement to submit PSP's for HQUSACE approval. Finally, we have increased our flexibility in addressing reconnaissance studies, recognizing that exceeding \$100,000 may be appropriate for some studies.

- As I discussed in the February issue of Planning Ahead, we are overhauling the Planning Guidance Notebook, in an effort to make it more understandable to field planners, project delivery teams, and everyone else. An important element of this overhaul is for the planning guidance to be sufficiently clear so that everyone understands

what we can do and how we should be doing it. I expect that some planners may not be aware of the range of opportunities available under our current authorities and policies and that is something we need to communicate more effectively.

- I also want to use the full range of programs and initiatives in building our civil works program. We have placed responsibility in one branch for our Flood Plain Management Services and Planning Assistance to States programs, our Coastal and Navigation coordination, and our coordination of high priority Administration programs including Coastal America, American Heritage Rivers, and Clean Water Action Plans. Each of these initiatives will be managed to strengthen our civil works program, and to assure that the level of our involvement is commensurate with importance to our mission.

- More importantly, this team will also serve as points of contact for assisting field offices in fully using all of our authorities in developing your programs. When you call, you should expect positive assistance either on ways to use and adapt our existing authorities, or else to coordinate with policy and programs offices to investigate modification of existing authorities or consideration of new authorities. The bottom line is that we will be looking for opportunities to help you.

- We are also looking at opportunities to support field initiatives in new areas, including urban watersheds and urban revitalization. We will proactively support initiatives that have high potential for successful partnerships with whatever resources we have available. I want to be your partner in making success happen.

What can field offices do to improve planning initiatives?

- **Think positive.** Investigate all the opportunities for developing your civil works programs, and don't simply assume that you can't address the water resource and environmental problems raised by your local, regional and state partners. As I previously explained, our authorities may provide greater latitude than field offices recognize, so I strongly urge field offices to elevate these proposals to Headquarters.

- **Produce quality plans and projects.** Being creative doesn't mean ignoring the principles upon which our plans and projects are formulated and evaluated. Just the opposite. Our projects

should generate positive environmental and economic impacts; locally, regionally and nationally. And our reports should clearly demonstrate the value of our projects.

- **Communicate.** Don't limit yourselves to your own brilliant ideas. Flatter someone else by borrowing his or her brilliant idea. In fact, I would like Planning Ahead to be one vehicle for exchanging ideas. If you are doing something that works, contact Harry Kitch to put it in this newsletter.

- **Get on board.** Forget the old war stories. This is a different HQUSACE team. We are working hard to make our field planners' task less difficult, and to provide support. We are all part of the same team. Your issues are our issues. Your problems are our problems. Everything starts with you – our field planners. The bottom line is that field planners and field project delivery teams are the keys to building a strong civil works program. Take the challenge! ❖

A Word from the Editor

Harry Kitch – CECW-PD

We are looking forward to receiving more and more such articles from the field, FOA's and labs so that we can share this valuable information across the Corps. A note to future authors - please limit your articles to five or six paragraphs and present the highlights. ❖

Native American Culture

Paul Blakey – CECW-PC

This is the third in a series of articles that we are presenting on Native American culture. When working with Native Americans in our planning, operations and construction projects, one should keep in mind the culture and ideas that they share, and the government to government relationship that we have with Federally recognized Tribes. The following questions and answers are extracted

from course material being developed by the Department of Defense.

QUESTION 1: The unique relationship that exists between the U.S. Government and Indian Tribes is ...

- a. legal and political, based upon the U.S. Constitution, treaties, statutes, executive orders and Supreme Court decisions,
- b. mutually agreeable,

QUESTION 2: Meaningful consultation with Tribes means...

- a. informing Tribal governments of Federal decisions,
- b. consulting with Tribal governments before taking an action that affects Tribal resources, Tribal rights or Indian lands,

ANSWER 1: (a) It is very difficult to mark the boundaries of this relationship and even more difficult to assess its legal consequences. At its broadest, the relationship includes the mixture of legal duties, moral obligations, understandings and expectancies that have arisen from the entire course of dealings between the Federal government and the Tribes. In its narrowest and most concrete sense, the relationship approximates that of trustee and beneficiary, with the trustee (the United States) subject in some degree to legally enforceable responsibilities.

In the case of the Congress, there has been no court enforcement of the duty and it has been essentially a moral or political obligation. The duty of the executive branch to the Tribes has been subjected to court enforcement and is increasingly a legal duty generally in regard to management of Indian lands or other properties, such as water rights. [Reference: William C. Canby, Jr.: American Indian Law in a Nutshell: 1998: West Publishing Co.]

ANSWER 2: (b) The new DOD American Indian/Alaska Native policy specifically requires that meaningful consultation and communication be fully integrated into all dealings with Tribes and Tribal governments, down to staff officers at the installation level. Consultation is defined to include participation in the decision making process as **sovereign authorities**, being informed of plans for action in a timely fashion (in time to participate in the decision making process), development of mutually agreeable protocols on a Tribe-by-Tribe basis and dispute resolution, if necessary. [Reference: U.S. Department of Defense.] ❖

UMR-IWWS Navigation Study – Overview & Environmental Analyses

Richard Fristik - CEMVR-PM-R

[Editor's note: This is the first in a planned series of articles on this major study. This article provides a brief study overview and focuses on the site-specific environmental analyses; future articles will address system environmental studies and other study components.]

This feasibility study, the largest the Corps has ever undertaken, is examining the need for commercial navigation infrastructure improvements on the Upper Mississippi and Illinois Rivers for the planning horizon of the years 2000-2050. Proposed construction measures include large-scale (lock extensions) and small-scale (a mix of structural and operational) measures. The overall study involves the efforts of five work groups – environmental, engineering, economics, plan formulation and public involvement; and involves four Districts within the Mississippi Valley Division – St. Paul, Rock Island, St. Louis, and New Orleans. The environmental work group is charged with assessing potential environmental impacts on both a site-specific and systemic basis, with a system Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) scheduled for completion in December 2000.

The system impact studies have focused on four major resource groups – fish, plants, mussels and bank erosion. A fifth major area of focus is navigation-induced sediment re-suspension. Determination of potential impacts due to incremental increases in navigation traffic due to any improvements has relied on numerous hydraulic and hydrodynamic models developed primarily by the Waterways Experiment Station in Vicksburg, MS. These models have provided the necessary data on physical forces generated by tows, the ultimate fate of these forces, and their role in direct and indirect effects on the resources of concern. The overall assessment is being conducted in an ecological risk framework, which considers uncertainties in the analysis and may point to certain variables most in need of additional data collection or study for ongoing river management.

Though the systemic studies are well along but yet to be completed, the site-specific work has

concluded. The objective of the site-specific habitat assessment was to evaluate potential construction impacts of the proposed alternatives. These evaluations were conducted in detail at five lock sites on the Mississippi, and two locks on the Illinois. An additional 14 lock sites were evaluated in a less detailed, qualitative manner. The study was initiated in May of 1995, and concluded in September of 1998 with the publication of the final report. Major study steps included: team formation; identification of resources of concern at the study sites; evaluation, selection and modification of a quantitative habitat analysis tool; field data collection; habitat model application and analysis of results; and, report preparation. The entire effort was highly complex and required extensive internal and external coordination, as well as exceptional cooperation between the Rock Island and St. Louis Districts.

Several aspects of the study resulted in the development of innovative approaches that facilitated efficiency in data management and analysis and thus timely study completion. For instance, in anticipation of the large volume of habitat evaluation data, HAT members developed a unique spreadsheet application of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Habitat Evaluation Procedures (HEP) for data analysis, which allowed flexibility in the analysis and provided several options for display of model outputs. The HEP analysis utilized 27 species models; most of these were modified to better fit project conditions, and 2 were newly created. Also, in response to concerns voiced by agency partners, the team conducted an analysis of hydraulic changes in dam tailwaters, which combined refined hydraulic model outputs and GIS mapping to portray areas of change in flow direction and magnitude related to specific fish habitat requirements. Finally, the analysis relied heavily on several newly developed mapping products that overlaid existing natural resource and land cover data with the various engineering measures under consideration. These mapping products were instrumental to the team's ability to visualize impacts and predict future change in habitat variables.

Two additional study accomplishments are also noteworthy. To complement existing data and facilitate analysis, contracted mussel surveys were scoped and completed at four of the study sites. These surveys utilized state-of-the-art survey, locational and mapping techniques and added greatly to the existing mussel resource database, to the benefit of future Corps projects and river

ecology in general. Also, recognizing that this effort was not currently aimed at formal mitigation planning, but did fit directly into overall study plan formulation (screening of alternatives), habitat replacement costs were estimated based on loss of habitat units as determined by the study. To formulate these costs, existing literature on resource valuation and habitat restoration was reviewed, as well as existing Corps habitat restoration programs (e.g., UMRS-EMP, Sec. 1135) and planning guidance. These cost estimates may form a foundation as formal mitigation planning is conducted in follow-on detailed site-specific efforts. ❖

[Editor's note: MG Fuhrman, D/CW, recently transmitted the following memorandum to the field.]

Update of Financial Analyses Guidance

John Burns -CECW-PE

1. References: ER 1105-2-100, dated 31 January 1998, Policy and Planning Guidance for Conducting Civil Works Planning Studies.

2. Effective immediately, you are delegated approval authority for financing plans. This is an initial delegation. Further delegations are being considered. Once this delegation process is completed, the referenced regulation will be revised accordingly. This authority may be further delegated to district commanders.

3. The referenced regulation provides the basic guidance for financial analysis and is provided for your use as appropriate. The level of detail to be included in a financing plan should be commensurate with the scope and complexity of the project and financing mechanisms being considered. Additionally, the district commander's assessment of financial capability and the Allocation of Funds Table must be included in the Project Cooperation Agreement (PCA) package. The financing plan is considered a working document to be used by the district commander in making his/her capability determination and need not be included in the PCA package. ❖

OMB QUESTIONNAIRES

Ron Conner - CECW-PD

On March 24, 1999, the Office of Management and Budget notified the Department of Defense that they have given approval for the use of *the Questionnaires for U.S. Army Engineer Civil Works Studies and Projects* in accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (Public Law 104-13). This approval includes both planning surveys under OMB number 0710-0001 and recreation resource management (operations) surveys formerly under OMB number 0710-0002. Any set of questions asked by the U.S. Corps of Engineers of 10 or more respondents outside the Federal Government must originate from OMB-approved questionnaires. This requirement also applies to contractors and local sponsors conducting public surveys in support of Corps studies.

OMB notice of action specified the following terms of clearance:

1. Wording changes to the specific questions to more accurately reflect the context of the survey are permitted.
2. Subsets or combinations of questions from one or more approved questionnaire, as applicable to the area and problem being evaluated, are permitted.
3. Each questionnaire must display the OMB control number (0710-0001) and expiration date (March 31, 2002), and must inform respondents that an agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. For surveys conducted orally, this information must also be provided.
4. Each questionnaire must be submitted to OMB for final approval prior to use. OMB will complete this approval step within 10 business days. Each questionnaire should be accompanied by a brief supporting statement describing the purpose of the survey, where and when it is to be conducted, the population to be surveyed, the sample size, the sampling methodology, and references to the approved generic questionnaires and question numbers. OMB will approve all questionnaires that are consistent with the generic questionnaires in this ICR (*Questionnaires for U.S. Army Engineer Civil Works Studies and Projects*) and these terms of clearance.

5. Corps Headquarters will send a memo to all District Offices informing them of the conditions for use of these questionnaires.

6. Corps Headquarters will provide a copy to OMB of the annual reports submitted by the Divisions each November summarizing their use of these questionnaires.

HQUSACE will shortly transmit a memorandum to all District and Division offices explaining the new procedures. The Division offices shall designate one point of contact to review all planning survey submittals and one point of contact to review all operations survey submittals. The division office must review the individual questionnaire for quality control before a district uses it. Division quality control review should be based upon the need for the questionnaire and the reasonableness and adequacy of:

- (1) The research questions to be answered;
- (2) The sampling strategy being employed;
- (3) The data collection procedures being employed, follow-up procedures;
- (4) The data analysis plan; and,
- (5) The consistency with OMB-approved questionnaires.

The division point of contact should submit survey applications by E-mail directly to Robert Cushing ("cushingr@osd.pentagon.mil") at the Office of the Secretary of Defense and James Laity ("jlaity@omb.eop.gov") at the Office of Management and Budget. For information purposes, copies of each questionnaire should also be sent to the appropriate Headquarters point of contact (Ron Conner for Planning and Judy Rice for Operations) and Stuart Davis, Institute for Water Resources.

Questions concerning this article can be addressed to Mr. Conner, (202) 761-0132. ❖

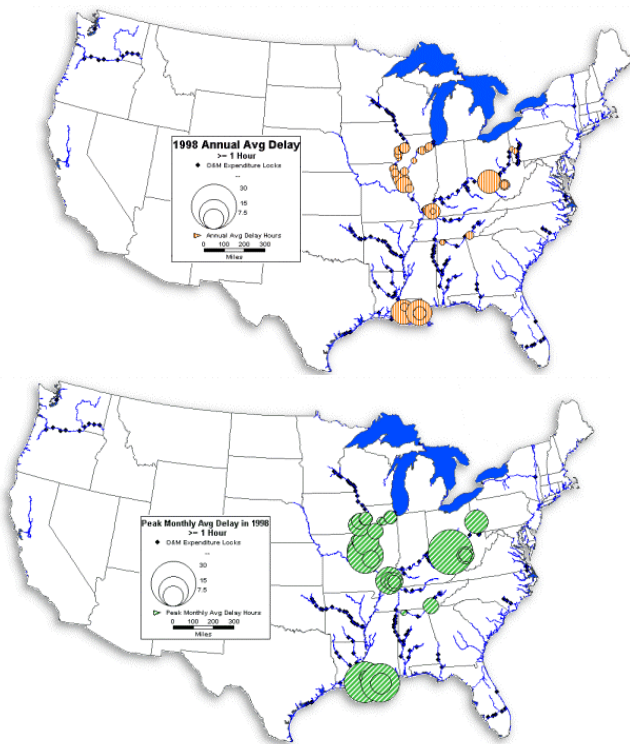
1998 Lock Statistics:
Check out the Internet

Arlene L Dietz - Ch. NDC-WRC

The **1998 Annual Summary of Lock Statistics** is found at the Navigation Data Center's (NDC) web site:

<http://www.wrsc.usace.army.mil/ndc>. This publication provides information on the physical characteristics of each Corps lock and a summary of the performance of most lock chambers for 1998 compared to 1997. Performance statistics include the number of vessels, barges and bottoms served by direction, total tonnage, number of lockages, number of tows, average and total tow delays. This is an annual report, what many district analysts want is monthly, weekly, daily or activity by activity level of detail.

Corps analysts may inquire at NDC about the comparison of performance statistics for any time frame. For example, the map from the NDC web site, **Map of Lock Chamber Delay** “new” compares average tow delays by lock chamber for the year and the peak month. This web product was NDC’s response to a special request. When visiting this map on the web click on “see the data” on the upper left side of the map to obtain a table which provides by chamber, the average hours of delay by peak month and year. What



can one learn from this comparison? The comparison of peak month to the average annual delay by chamber shows an

amplification of congestion at nearly all locks. Most locks show at least a doubling of delays.

Data users may have questions, such as the one that had NDC generate the Internet **Map of Lock Chamber Delay**. NDC will periodically place these special products on its web site. If you would like to have NDC routinely update this product or add others please call Bob Baldwin at 703-428-8047 or e-mail at robert.baldwin@usace.army.mil.

Information/Tools U-Can-Use

Chuck Moeslein - CECW-PF

In an effort to provide user-friendly sources of information to assist Corps Planning folks in their day-to-day activities, we put together the following initial list of web-site addresses that may be helpful in answering that nagging question of “Where Do I Look”. Try “surfing the net” on a couple of these and give us your feedback. If folks like it, we can try to provide additional sources of information/assistance on a regular basis (with YOUR help and input as well).

Data Bases

Surf Your Watershed - A “watershed-based” multifaceted, information packed site, with site tours and simple “How To Get There From Here” instructions. A “Must See” for ALL planners. You may find out some things about your watershed that you didn’t know. Check it out at: www.epa.gov/surf

Govbot - A Government search engine developed by The Center for Intelligent Information Retrieval (CIIR). The CIIR has gathered over 1 million web pages from U.S. Government and Military Sites around the country. Govbot is easily accessible through the White House Virtual Library: www.whitehouse.gov/WH/html/library.html

Administration Initiatives

This provides you with a brief description of two Administration initiatives that may help in your planning efforts as you partner with local sponsors;

the first is a grant program, the second, a financing program. Both provide opportunities for our programs and are worth exploring.

1) Lands Legacy Initiative

Proposed by President Clinton in his FY 2000 budget he transmitted to Congress on 1 February 1999, this \$1 Billion initiative will "... expand Federal protection of critical lands across America, help states and communities preserve local green spaces, and strengthen protection for our oceans and coasts". If approved, this would represent a 125% increase over FY 1999 funding (it includes \$900 Million from the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF), marking the first time any Administration has requested full funding from LWCF, which draws revenues from Federal offshore oil sales). The Lands Legacy Initiative is a three-pronged approach, consisting of: Saving America's Natural Treasures (consisting of Federal Acquisitions and Protecting Our Parks); Helping States and Communities Preserve Green Spaces; and Protecting Our oceans and Coasts.

This is largely a grant program, but it provides opportunities for potential Corps involvement, leveraging our resources, and providing more comprehensive products; most likely in the latter two prongs (as mentioned above), and so a short description and associated proposed funding amounts are listed below for each. We need to be linking up with these other Federal initiatives to leverage our Corps dollars. Many would require some effort by your partners to apply for the grants. However, these could come in handy when you're out there talking with your local project sponsors. On the Web at: www.pub.whitehouse.gov/uri...oma.eop.gov.us/1999/1/12/11.text.1

a) Helping States and Communities Preserve Green Spaces - Several sub-items included under this prong involve matching grants to states, locals, etc. and promote collaborative strategies (e.g., sustaining both wildlife and economic development, restoration of parks in economically distressed urban communities, etc.).

Land Acquisition Grants - Includes \$150 Million for matching grants to state, local and tribal governments for "smart growth" and open space preservation. Grants are awarded on a competitive basis, with priority going to projects consistent with statewide "smart growth" plans.

Open Space Planning Grants - Proposes \$50 Million of matching grants to states to develop open space preservation and "smart growth" strategies. States would use a variety of data and tools to identify priority areas.

Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund - Proposes \$80 Million for collaborative strategies that sustain both wildlife and economic development.

Farmland Protection Program - Provide \$50 Million in matching grants to states, communities, tribes, etc. for the purchase of permanent conservation easements on farmland threatened by development. The program, administered by USDA (NRCS), was created by the 1996 Farm Bill.

Smart Growth Partnership - A new revolving loan program to support acquisition of land and easements in rural areas.

Urban Parks and Recreation Recovery - Consists of \$4 Million in proposed matching grants and technical assistance for the restoration of parks in economically distressed urban communities.

b) Protecting Our Oceans and Coasts - Several items included under this prong involve helping states implement coastal management and restoration plans, and making use of dredged material to restore coastal habitats.

Coastal Zone Management Act Program - Proposes \$90 million to help states implement Critical Coastal Area Management and restoration Plans. Matching grants can be used to protect wildlife habitat, protect life and property from coastal hazards, and revitalize ports and urban waterfronts.

National Estuarine Research Reserves System - Includes \$19 Million of proposed funding to expand a network of critical estuaries representing all the biological region's along America's coasts.

Coastal Dredge Area Restoration - Proposes \$10 Million for NOAA to work with the Corps to use material dredged from ports and shipping channels to restore coastal habitats.

2) Livability Agenda: Building Livable Communities For the 21st Century

This program may offer the local partners increased financing flexibility. We will further investigate specific program limitations, including application/usage of program funds (e.g., use of program funds toward local sponsor cost share amount), and report our findings in a future edition of this newsletter. Announced by Vice President Gore last September, the comprehensive Livability Agenda is aimed at helping "...communities across America grow in ways that ensure a high quality of life and strong, sustainable economic growth". The Clinton-Gore Livability Agenda aims to help citizens and communities preserve green spaces, ease traffic congestion, restore a sense of community, promote collaboration, and enhance economic competitiveness. Also included in the President's FY 2000 budget request to Congress to support major Livability programs is "Better America Bonds"; a proposed new financing tool generating \$9.5 Billion in bond authority for investments by state, local and tribal governments. This proposal is aimed at helping communities reconnect with their land and water, preserve green space for future generations, and provide attractive settings for economic development. Web site is: www.whitehouse.gov/CEQ/011499.html

We will report more on these and other collaborative, leveraging opportunities, as they become available. ❖

Submissions Deadline

The deadline for material for the next issue is 23 April 1999. ❖

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